

# Preparing the Local Watershed Management Program



WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

Notes 5

Environmental Management



*Being at the forefront when meeting the demands of affected local population, LGUs are in the best position to develop and implement watershed management programs.*

## Managing Better with Limited Resources

Watershed areas hold rich deposits of resources that are necessary for sustaining life. For this reason, managing them requires careful planning and implementation. Piece-meal and palliative solutions to problems associated with degraded watershed areas are not enough. Local government units (LGUs) often bear the brunt of problems related to watershed protection because they are at the forefront when it comes to meeting the demands of affected local populations. LGUs are in the best position, despite limited resources, to develop and implement programs that express both the values of the community and the unique aspects of the watershed.

The cost of watershed management is high. A locally developed watershed program is the best means for LGUs to fully tap local resources and consequently attract outside help. A local watershed management program informs the LGU's annual planning process and can also help to insure scarce resources are invested in the right priorities. Whereas, national government projects that act on problems and opportunities of national importance tend to leave the LGU on the sidelines, a locally developed watershed program will give the LGU the advantage to act within the range of its authority, resources, and priorities. Such programs will give the LGU a head start in acting on urgent concerns and will also serve as a basis for dialogue and consensus with supportive national agencies and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

This issue outlines the steps on how to formulate a formal program of activities using outputs of delineation, characterization, and consensus building processes discussed at length in *Local Governance Technical Notes 2-1999, 3-1999, and 4-1999*.

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## Technology

### Formulating a Local Watershed Management Program

The conceptual appreciation and operationalization of watershed management, traditionally a domain of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), is generally perceived to be beyond the capability of LGUs. However, a number of practices that have worked so well in several LGUs prove otherwise. Based on their experience, your LGU can develop a local watershed management program following these essential steps:

1. Organize a watershed planning team. Reinforce the joint local government and DENR technical team with advocates from the basic sectors, representatives from NGOs/People's Organizations (PO), private sector, and other stakeholders.
2. Assign the team to undertake watershed delineation and characterization to determine the watershed boundaries, define wa-

tershed characteristics, and identify constraints and opportunities. Read [Local Governance Technical Notes on Watershed Management \(LGTN-WSM\) Notes 2-1999 on Delineating Boundaries of the Watershed Important to the Community](#) and [LGTN-WSM Notes 3-1999 on Knowing the Characteristics of the Community Watershed](#) for recommended approaches and procedures.

3. If necessary, engage external resource groups or individuals that can help analyze problems and identify options and resources that can be tapped.

4. Observe the good practices of other LGUs. Identify areas of excellence in watershed management and note how LGUs resources which are available locally and those of complementary national programs.

5. Build consensus on strategies and priorities to manage the watershed better using tools such as Technology of Participation (ToP). Read [LGTN-WSM Notes 4-1999 on Building Consensus for Watershed Management](#). Organize information gathered in steps 1 to 4 above, disseminate it to stakeholders, and use it for consensus building.

6. Determine specific doable actions to support priorities established by consensus. For instance, if the primary objective is to help upland farmers within the watershed, actions may include provisions for community organizing, quality planting materials, security of tenure, extension services and marketing assistance, off-farm livelihood, and capability building for LGU staff.

7. Determine priority geographic areas where activities can first be piloted, preferably in a small area where the chances for success



*Specific doable actions can include improving farmers' access to good quality tree seedlings through tree nurseries like this one in Nueva Vizcaya.*

are higher—this is essential to large-scale implementation.

8. Prepare a three- to five-year program document containing the statement of objectives, strategies, and short- and long-term interrelated actions such as those described in step 6. Specify implementors and budgets based on projected resources. Focus initially on what can be done immediately using local resources. This will increase the chances of attracting external support later on. Use the program document as a basis for determining activities to be incorporated in the LGU's Annual Investment Plan (AIP).

9. Develop performance and success indicators for monitoring and evaluation.

10. Organize a forum or roundtable discussion among service providers and local private and community groups to get their support.

#### Suggested Contents of a Watershed Program Document

- Background – how the program was prepared and for what purpose
- Project Area – watershed boundaries overlaid with LGU boundaries
- Constraints and Opportunities
- Objectives and Strategies – as defined during the consensus building workshop
- Program Activities – short and long term activities
- Organization and Management – who does what
- Budget
- Performance Indicators
- Annex showing maps, tables, and diagrams



## Policy and Practice

### Enabling Framework

Republic Act No. 7160 or the Local Government Code mandates LGUs to take charge of their environment, in general, and their watershed, in particular. The Code encourages LGUs to formulate programs to protect important local resources such as watershed areas. The Joint Memorandum Circular 98-01 between the DENR, Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the LGUs concerned enables LGUs to manage timberlands marked out as community watershed areas. The Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA) requires that agricultural planning

and development ensure that watershed systems are protected.

The Forestry Reform Code considers watershed areas as special natural systems that need to be managed carefully. To underscore this, the DENR promulgated regulations focusing on watershed areas. DENR Administrative Order (DAO) 99-01 mandates the adoption of the watershed as a basic planning unit. DAO 97-02 requires watershed characterization to be undertaken before a watershed management plan is formulated.

Certain nationally important watershed areas classified as part of the

National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) are managed by Protected Areas Management Boards (PAMB) where LGUs are expected to play a major role. In cases where two or more LGUs share a watershed, more than one LGU representative sits in the PAMB. Under NIPAS, the preliminary basis for the PAMB in managing an area is the initial protected area plan (IPAP) that divides a watershed area into buffer zones, multiple use, or strict protection zones, and prescribes specific management guidelines for each zone.

### Practices That Are Working

The Municipality of Dumarao, Capiz rallied various sectors to participate in the formulation of the watershed management program by conducting the "People's Congress." This facilitated a multi-sectoral consensus building

exercise where watershed management was identified as a priority environmental management program. The approach was to use the watershed as a unit for planning and program development for the management of its local environmental problems.

To translate the consensus into a program of action, Dumarao organized a planning team. It pooled together multidisciplinary representatives from Dumarao, national government agencies (NGA), the academe, and NGO/Pos. A significant aspect of the program was the definition of the nature and level of involvement of NGAs in program implementation. The program clarified the roles of NGAs and the LGU so that their roles can be coordinated.

Dumarao's action to delineate and characterize its watershed area enabled it to identify neighboring local governments which are located within the same watershed, and pinpoint problems such as tenure security of farmers in private lands, including

those with certificates of stewardship contracts (CSCs).

The development of the program required a review of options in dealing with critical problems associated with the watershed. Cross visits were organized and resource persons were invited to broaden the options of the planning team in relation to various innovative approaches and solutions. The resulting program provided the framework for identifying and prioritizing specific investments.

The formulation, adoption, and implementation of the watershed management program proved that Dumarao used an approach that proved to be socially and ecologically acceptable to stakeholders. The results of the 1998 elections was an affirmation of the correctness of its approach because the previous Mayor of Dumarao won by a huge margin as Vice Governor of the Province of Capiz, while the former Vice Mayor ran unopposed as Mayor of the municipality.



*In Dumarao, Capiz tree farming is encouraged to protect the watershed.*





# LGU Action Agenda

## Other Initiatives

In Lantapan, Bukidnon, the local government conducted a consensus building workshop among local farmers, business leaders, NGOs, and NGAs using the Technology of Participation (ToP). Technical information on the watershed was provided by supporting research institutions and used to develop interventions identified with the community through consensus building. The program document now guides the LGU annual planning and budgeting.

In Arakan, Cotabato, the Environment and Natural Resources Council successfully led an upland conservation and rehabilitation planning process that involved a multidisciplinary panel of resource persons who helped the community decide on the best course of action. Part of the watershed management program involves the purchase of occupied lands within the watershed to ensure its protection.



*The Arakan Valley watershed area in Cotabato was the focus of an upland conservation and rehabilitation process conducted by the Environment and Natural Resources Council.*

## Resources and References

If you need facilitators to conduct consensus building workshops using Technology of Participation (ToP), you may call these Centers for Local Governance (CLGs):

- **Bulacan State University**—Institute of Local Government Administration, Malolos, Bulacan, Tel. (044) 791-0153 c/o Dr. Modesta Lugos
- **Divine Word College**—Research Center, Tagbilaran, Bohol, Tel. (038) 411-3658 c/o Ms. Cynthia Ayco
- **Gerry Roxas Foundation**, Dayao, Roxas City, Tel. (036) 621-1922 c/o Ms. Annie Villarruz

Several local governments have prepared various interventions to manage their watershed areas. Their experiences may guide you as you begin your watershed management program. Some are *Galing Pook* awardees – the list is available at **Department of Interior and Local**

**Government (DILG)**—Office of Public Affairs, tel. (02) 925-0353 and 925-0352. You may also call the **Galing Pook Awards Secretariat, Asian Institute of Management**, at tel. (02) 867-2529.

For years, several NGOs have been actively involved in community-based upland and agroforestry development. The **Upland NGO Assistance Committee (UNAC)** has documented lessons and technology in community-based work. They can be contacted at 52-C Salvador St., Loyola Heights, Quezon City, telephone number (02) 436-0706.

For financial assistance, local governments can negotiate for inclusion of some of their watershed management activities in national line agency programs by participating in program planning and budgeting exercises of these agencies. The

**Department of Finance (DOF)** through the World Bank-assisted Community-Based Resource Management Program (CBRMP) provides a combination of grants and loans for LGUs who wish to augment their local programs with funds for capital investments. Contact the CBRM Project Office at the DOF, Central Bank Complex, Manila, telephone number (02) 522-3262 or the regional DOF offices in Regions 5, 7, 8, and 13. LGUs can also help their local NGOs get project grants from external organizations supporting community-based work. To get an idea of what these organizations are, NGOs may contact UNAC or the **Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE)** at No. 97 Matahimik St., Teacher's Village, Diliman, Quezon City, tel. (02) 927-2186.